7/7/71

Dear Crestes,

You are indeed my friend to send me the clippings that came this morning, and of all the people I know in N.O., you are the only one to do so. I do appreciate it, and I hope you will continue to do so, if possible everything that appears in the papers down there. I used to subscribe to them, but my finances are such I had to stop it some time ago.

Do not be concerned because the back of this paper is yellow. It is for a special kind of copying machine and was given to me because it is out of date. It keeps me from having to buy paper. It does not mean the letter was tampered with.

I have used the dictionary to get the meaning of the Spanish phrases you use, and they are morally correct and wise. However, I am withholding judgement on what is and what is not true for reasons I will explain.

Perhaps the easiest way to make you understand is that if I believed what the federal government said about you, I would not trust you. Yet we are friends, I do trust you, and you have been a good friend to me. They do not always tell the truth, as they do not always lie. It is unfortunate that government sometimes shapes things to serve special interests.

One of the things that gives me concern in this case is that they have, I think, done such improper things that it will make it impossible to convict either Garrison or the others, and it was not necessary to do so. The affidavits that are appearing in the newspapers do violate the rights of the accused under our law and, in my opinion, they also violate the standards of the bar. I have to ask myself why the Department of Justice, which knows the law as well as anyone, violates it. If I do not have the answer, to me this is a question that must be asked. I know of other cases where this was done because it was the only way in which the accused could avoid being convicted. In the case down there now, I will not be surprised if the courts find that no jury can be selected because of this great and entirely unnecessary publicity about things that are supposed not to be known to the jury until such a time as they are presented in court and under the regulations and procedures prescribed by the law.

As you now know, Garrison and I had many disagreements. I did not stay there for the Shaw trial, told them they would lose and why and was right, which is not the way to make people like you. I had some pretty strong arguments, and not with Jim alone. He did things with which I could not agree, associated with people I did not trust, and our relations got pretty cool. Not long after the time you drove him home when he came to see me, our relations got so cool that we almost never talked. But that has nothing to do with whether or not he is guilty of this charge or, if he is, if he was framed. If he is guilty, I can find no justification for it. There is another legal word you may not know, "entrapment". This means if it is fixed up so that a man will seem to be guilty or so that he will, in fact, be guilty as a result of being tricked into it. Based on what I know of him and what I think I know of his finances, I find it hard to believe that Jim is either a crook or a cheap crook. This is one of the reasons I appreciate your sending me these things and will appreciate it if you continue to, for I do want to know the truth and I do want to know what is charged. I will return to this.

I also know Pershing Gervais pretty well. He was always honest in describing his own crooked activities. One of your notes may address what I am coming to. It is "Quien vende la verdad nunca termino limpio." I take this to mean "Who sells the truth never ends free." I hope this is correct, for it fits exactly. Gervais had it

made. He was rich, enjoyed life very much, and is one of the last people I'd expect to find it possible to spend the rest of his life hiding. This is what he will have to do now. Not hiding from Garrison, but from the mob. Again, I have to ask myself why, as some reporters with papers that are Garrison's worst enemies are also asking. Another of your Spanish sayings, as I make it out, is approximately, "It is better to remain a crook than to sell the truth." Why did Pershing do this, then? Why did he confess to being a criminal himself? All that I can think of is that there was so much on him that he had to fear death or spending the rest of his life in jail. He is an old fixer and framed and bragged about how he could frame either way.

I would imagine that even if Garrison were not guilty, and as you know, I have no way of knowing, Pershing, when he knew he was wired with a transmitter, could arrange conversation so that what Garrison said would seem guilty. Pershing was so wired for a year. Did it take that long if Garrison was so guilty?

Alford resigned with a blast on June 21, and the blast involved this pin-ball business. It is hard for me to believe that after that, after all the publicity on it (friend in New York sent me that clipping), the next week Garrison would allow himself to be trapped on the same matter. Can he be that big a fool?

It would help my understanding if I knew whether he was continuing his investigation of continuing to try and raise money to pay back debts. If either of these things could be true, then it is possible, whether or not it was the fact, that he thought this money I have no doubt Gervais gave him was such a contribution.

So, I am trying to keep my mind open so that if the truth can be established there will be room for it. I know too much of the dirty and dishonest things the FBI and others in the government have done to accept their word without question. If Jim is guilty, I want to know that. And if there is reason to believe he was framed, that also I want to be able to see.

One of the little mysteries I could never solve down there figures in this case now. Soule was a captain. When he was sent to Garrison's office he worked like an ordinary policeman. I understand that the police department makes these assignments. How many captains do you know who are satisfied to work like ordinary cops? I found myself wondering about this captain who worked like a patrolman and under a sergeant and stayed away from him. Now it is possible to offer an explanation: they knew they had the goods on him, so they shifted him to Garrison's office so that his mere presence would make Garrison seem guilty. Once he got to be a captain, he was not likely to resign and give up his retirement, especially when he had so easy a job. And more, if he was getting such graft, could he continue to if he had no police connection?

I have answered you right away to thank you, to explain the questions in my mind, to ask that you continue to send me what you can. I am loaded with work, having started at 5 a.m. Because my typing is so bad, I will ask my wife to read and correct it. Again my thanks. If you want to add anything to what you see in the papers, please do not be afraid to use your tape recorder.

Sincerely,